

Attendance: S Deery / M Sands / E Taylor / J McClafferty / M Sweeney /
E Denham

1. **Apologies** : Adele McCormick and Fergus Dougall

2. **Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

The group agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 November 2020 as being accurate.

Smarter Working

- Susan noted that the introduction of Smarter Working would be phased in over a lengthy period of time. The current Ayrshire locality property developments are using Smarter Working as a foundation to their developments and providing different choices and options to staff in how they deliver their role within the office environment and it was noted that there may be learning from the Ayrshire Locality to inform our strategy and policy development. Morna informed that there are currently protocols in place within that Locality i.e. where to consume food, how to control noise levels which may be helpful to others adopting Smarter Working in the future . **ACTION:** Susan to discuss further in EMT and then return back to the HR Sub Group.

Dignity at Work

- **ACTION:** A reminder will be given to staff to complete this course within the 12 month period. Managers to encourage all staff.

Falkirk Council Pension Fund – LGPS Scheme Changes

- Morna provided examples and explained that the conditions for paying a pension to a surviving partner has been relaxed. Previously, at the time of their death, a member had to have been legally free to marry/form civil partnership for a period of at least 2 years. Now the member only needs to have been free to marry/form a civil partnership at the time of their death. Other conditions continue to apply e.g. the member and partner must have been living together as a married couple/civil partners for at least 2 years and financially interdependent or the partner dependent on the member. **ACTION:** Eileen asked if a cohabiting partner could be included in that paragraph.
- Morna identified the 3 types of 'partners' a member may leave behind – a surviving spouse, a civil partnership and a cohabiting partner.

- Due to their legal marital status a surviving spouse / civil partner has an automatic entitlement to the survivors pension being the wife, husband, civil partner of the deceased.
- It is and was only the category of cohabiting partner that has to satisfy the additional requirements prior to having a surviving partner's entitlement.
- **ACTION:** Susan suggests using gender neutral language if we publicise anything ourselves.

Disability Leave Policy

- **ACTION:** To be brought back to a future agenda.

Recruitment and Selection Policy

- **ACTION:** Morna and Susan to agree on the best time to launch the revised policy. Susan suggested in launching to managers first and to all staff thereafter. Susan informed the group that an eLearning package has also been developed as a training tool.
- Monica confirmed that stewards have been informed that the policy is there and that the launch is yet to come. Monica has not heard of any negative feedback in relation to the delayed launch.

Shadowing and Mentoring Scheme

- Agreed in the last HR Sub Group meeting that the scheme would be launched after the summer. .

Flexible Working

- At previous HR Sub Group meeting Monica raised a concern around one Locality which has fixed its starting time across all reporter staff which has limited flexibility to staff and which did not appear to be in line with policy. **ACTION:** . Morna to discuss at relevant LMTs to consider options to meet operational needs.

3. Learning and Development Policy

- Susan noted the intention to recruit Learning Ambassadors across SCRA. These ambassadors can be staff who already deliver training, such as Senior Practitioners or other members of staff who are interested in developing and supporting SCRA in this area. Eileen noted that it would be good to see a broad range of staff involved in this role. Susan agreed that this gives others an opportunity to lead on training.
- The purpose of CPD (Continuing Professional Development) is to identify gaps in your skill and it is important in keeping track of your development and can be personal to an individual. Staff need to be encouraged to enter their

skills on iTrent under 'Career and Development' to make this information more accessible for HR when running a training analysis report. **ACTION:** To inform and encourage all staff to enter details on iTrent.. **ACTION:** Susan to add paragraph on continuous development.

- **ACTION:** Susan to replace the word 'professional' with 'learning to date'.

Morna asked if reference to Personal Development Plan (PDP) could be made within the policy, and clarification given in relation to PDP and CPD

- Susan explained the flow chart for Approval of Funding a training request which is essentially a summary of Appendix 1. Monica queried if there is an appeal process. If request is rejected Morna clarified that there needs to be a form of informal conversation when the manager and employee has a conversation on why they have been denied. Staff need to understand why their request has not been approved. If staff do not understand the reasons they can speak to HR. **ACTION:** Susan to change wording under this heading in relation to appeals and to change the flow chart to reflect the change. Eden to refine flow chart.
- The policy will be launched at the end of summer 2020.

4. People Strategy

- Susan advised that this strategy was going to the Board later in the week. Susan began by outlining the main area of focus for the next three years bearing in mind that year one's focus will be on CSAS.
- The People Strategy has been developed following thorough consultation with managers, equalities network, HR Sub Group, wider staff group, staff survey results and as such the HR Sub Group will recognise many of the aims and aspirations of the Strategy.
- **ACTION:** Susan noted that the People Strategy will be in effect from 1st April 2020 and feedback should be provided before then.
- **ACTION:** Monica will take to the UNISON Branch for discussion.

5. Annual Workforce Plan

- Susan introduced the Annual Workforce Plan, which meets Year 1 of the People Strategy. The HR Sub Group discussed the various actions in detail which are planned for 2020/21 which included recruitment, rewards, workload equalisation, development, wellbeing and engagement . **ACTION:** Susan noted that the Annual Workforce Plan will be in effect from 1st April, 2020 and feedback should be provided before then. **ACTION:** Monica will take to the UNISON Branch for discussion.

6. Gender Pay Gap and Equalities

- Susan informed the group that SCRA's Gender Pay Gap report had been completed which continues to show a high pay gap. Susan reiterated that due to the current demographics of SCRA e.g. 87% female workforce and with 97% of all staff in lower grades (A – D) being female being the main contributor to the high pay gap. **ACTION:** The Gender Pay Gap Report and action plan will be tabled at the next meeting.
- Equalities Monitoring Campaign **ACTION:** Eden to inform group of any increase in the recording.

7. Supervision Framework

- The HR Sub Group noted that the review of the Supervision was almost complete. One outstanding issue was providing more detail on what group supervision might look like. **ACTION:** Jim indicated that Lanarkshire Health Board had good guidance and would seek to get a copy of that for the next meeting
- Supervision Framework to be agreed at next HR Sub and thereafter relaunched.

8. Organisational Change Policy Review

- Members indicated that they had not had the opportunity to review for this meeting.
- **ACTION:** To be carried forward to March meeting for discussion.

9. Holiday Year

- A Locality had indicated that they found workload difficult to manage at Christmas particularly for support due to staff using up leave at the end of the year, Christmas lunches, seasonal absence whilst trying to prepare hearings work for January. The HR Sub Group discussed the potential to change the leave year to avoid using leave at Christmas. The group didn't think this would resolve the issue but perhaps a different approach to managing this period may be considered.

ACTION: Morna would suggest linking the locality with North Lanarkshire given their experience.

10. Parental Bereavement Leave

- Morna introduced the new statutory requirement to the Leave and Associated Allowance Policies which is the Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Regulations (Jack's Law) which will come into effect on 1 April 2020.

- This will introduce a statutory right to a minimum of 2 weeks' paid bereavement leave for the parents who have lost a child under the age of 18, or who suffer a still birth from 24 weeks of pregnancy.
- All employees eligible irrespective of length of service.
- Leave can be taken either a single block of 2 weeks or as 2 separate blocks of one week at different times across the first year after their child's death.
- Leave is paid "Statutory parental bereavement pay" – the statutory rate is currently £145.18 per week and to be eligible to receive the 2 weeks statutory pay.

11. AOB

None.

12. Date of Next Meeting

10 March 2020 – Ochil House, Boardroom